

12. (twice amended) The sound-transmissive cover assembly of claim 1, wherein said microporous membrane is supported only around its periphery by a plurality of adhesive support systems.

26. (amended) A method of using a microporous membrane as a sound-transmissive acoustic protective cover for an electronic device having a transducer, comprising:

supporting a microporous membrane only around its periphery with at least one adhesive support system such that at least a portion of said membrane is free to move in response to acoustic energy; and

orienting said supported microporous membrane so as to cover the transducer in the electronic device, thereby forming a sound-transmissive acoustic protective cover;

whereby the cover has an instantaneous water entry pressure of at least one meter water column and an overall acoustic transmission loss of no more than 3 dB in the range of frequencies from 300 to 3000 Hz.

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 and 24-27 were rejected in an Office Action dated January 4, 2001. Claims 1, 6, 7, 12 and 26 have been amended to better clarify the unique features of the claimed invention. Support for the amendments may be found in the "Detailed Description of the Invention." Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the following remarks.

I. The Claims are Not Anticipated by the Prior Art

Claims 1-4, 6-7, 9-12, and 24-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being inherently anticipated by Repolle et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,828,012). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

A brief description of the present invention is warranted. Specifically, the present invention is a sound-transmissive protective cover assembly which constitutes an improvement over the teachings of the Repolle et al. patent. The improvement in the construction of the present invention is that, rather than having an assembly where the porous support layer covers the entire surface of the protective membrane including the unbonded region, in the claimed invention the protective membrane is not covered by any support layer in the unbonded region. Thus, due to the free movement of the unbonded protective membrane absent any support layer, the resulting assembly provides enhanced acoustic